

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, February 27, 2005
The Center of Clayton – OASIS Meeting Room A

The following members were present:

Andy Goldberg, Chairman	
Jill Belsky	Jill Indovino
Mimi Deem	Bob Margulis
Deb Dubin	Rich Yawitz

Excused/Absent

Dick Hyde
Omri Praiss

Also Present:

Patty DeForrest, Director of Parks and Recreation

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the December 12, 2005 meeting were approved.

Director's Report

The Shaw Park Ice Rink closed on Sunday, February 26. We will incur large expenses if we continue to keep the Ice Rink open. What needs to be determined is how much it means to the community. We need to purchase a new zamboni, replace compressors, and resolve the issues with the City's electrical lights which are housed in the Ice Rink's ammonia suppression system. It is a challenge to keep the Ice Rink open. We made changes to the hours of operation. When we were open program and general use was good. The Ice Rink is scheduled to be open ninety-four days per season. Rink operations are one of the big things that we will want to look at in the Master Plan. Even staff has mixed feelings about the operations of the Ice Rink. Hockey teams would be very disappointed if the Ice Rink closed. We could turn it into a Skateboard Park. However, many cities choose not to do that because there are liability issues.

The Center is very busy and everything is going well. The Tennis Center is getting ready to start CHS practices. We are scheduled to start online registration on Monday, March 27. A lot of detailed work went into this process behind the scenes. Ms. DeForrest offered the opportunity to the Commission members to go online and try it out online registration for us before we go live with online registration. We may look into adding facility reservations online. Marketing for program and services is done online. We have about 2,000 member e-mails. The Center Line is sent to these individuals. Ms. DeForrest suggested that the Commission members go to the City's website and sign up to receive e-news newsletters. The Summer brochure has gone to print.

The only special event in March is the Electronic Recycling Event which will be held on March 24 and 25. Electronics can be dropped off in Shaw Park near Shaw Park Drive.

The Hanley House Council has been working very hard. They received seven RFQ submittals. The Council has narrowed it down to five and will interview three firms. The selection committee will come back to this committee at the end of March with their recommendation. The Hanley House files, which were kept in the Parks and Recreation department, have been reviewed. This Council meets on the fourth Monday of every month at 5:00 p.m.

Oak Knoll Park has had many trees removed on the North side. We lost six trees during the big storm. Ms. Renard decided to clean out additional trees in the park to create a beautiful space. She also removed the honey suckle and will replace it with Evergreens. A little trail will also be added to this space. It is a very exciting transition. The people who reside on the west side of the park would like for the City to do the same thing to that side of the Park. The Evergreens will block the view, so we did not receive any complaints from anyone on Southmoor.

The Glenridge Inclusion Program did receive the grant from Municipal Parks Association for approximately \$119,000 in cooperation with the School District. The work on the playground will take place over spring break. The City is funding 5% and the School District is also funding 5%. The PTO is funding the remainder of the cost. The total cost of the project is \$188,000. Installation will be completed by Playground Landscaping. Most of the playground will be Poured in Place and some areas will have wood chips. All of the pieces are prefabricated. The School District is responsible for overseeing the project.

The CRSWC has made the decision to eliminate the position of the Executive Director. The Parks and Recreation staff will work directly with the School District to see how things work without this position. The CRSWC plans to operate on a six month trial basis to see how things go during this transition period.

The Parks Foundation is currently working on the new Caring for Clayton Park's initiative and they are almost ready to go forward with their plan. The Foundation is spearheading a fundraising effort to help with tree replacement, benches, tables, and may work on the gazebo at Oak Knoll Park. They want to make sure the community is aware of their involvement.

Ms. DeForrest announced that Mr. Shapiro resigned from the Commission, and Mr. Margulis and Ms. Belsky are not running for re-election. The Commission would like to ensure that people in the community are aware of the openings within this advisory board. Further, the Board of Alderman is working on streamlining all re-elections to ensure that they all take place at the same time. One time a year people will receive information about Boards and Commissions. The Commission agreed that what they need to have is a predefinition of the mission of the Commission. Their strategic plan would state how the Commission operates and this information will be included in the Master Plan.

The Joint Study Committee is looking at Parks and Recreation. They have a meeting March 8 and Ms. DeForrest will bring information back to the Commission. The current project is to do a comparative analysis of facilities, programs and services with Richmond Heights. The objective is to see what each entity would gain they were to merge under joint services and to identify any potential problems. The Heights and the Center of Clayton both have community centers, and the Heights have entities that the Center does not have, such as a library and larger Fitness Center. Furthermore, the Center also has entities that the Heights does not have, such as the Climbing Wall and Competition Pool. So these are things we would gain if there was a merger. The challenge is that we are already a shared usage facility. We already have some cooperative agreements with the Heights. For instance we purchase swimsuits and parks supplies together. In 2002 a cooperative study was completed and at that time we also began doing some special events and staff training with the Heights.

Master Plan

The main objective will be to identify who is going to be on the Master Plan selection committee. We will end up with fifteen proposals. Ms. Indivino and Mr. Yawitz will serve on the selection committee. There will also need to be a working committee to work with the consultant. A consultant needs to be selected within the next month. Ms. DeForrest stated the first step that staff needs to do is to see if the firms meet all of the qualifications. Then we will have firms come into do presentations in which they will expand on their qualifications, and the subcommittee will have the opportunity to ask the consultant questions and rank them. It will be somewhat time consuming. Mr. Goldberg stated that it would be nice to see the RFQ proposal that went out to these consultants, view what work they had done in the past and review their qualifications. We are hiring someone to be very structured. The RFQ is posted on the website and consultants were asked for their basic background, organizational structure, if they would hire consultants, what similar work have they done in the past, and for references and recommendations. We want someone who will do a general Master Plan. This is a conceptual Master Plan not a design Master Plan. The consultant will look at current state of programs and make recommendations. The concepts will be to and identify community interests and needs. The working committee will be in charge of surveying and giving the consultant direction. They will not look at facilities, but will focus on what the

community priorities are and where we are lacking with programs and new ammunites. We will find out what is cutting edge and see if there something we need to start looking at. The consultant and the working subcommittee will meet with operation staff and CHS personnel. The budget for this project is \$35,000. Ms. DeForrest noted that the Master Plan that was conducted in 1992 had almost everything has happen, which shows it was very effective. This was also a conceptual Master Plan. Mr. Yawitz noted it is very important to choose a consultant who really understands Clayton. Ms. DeForrest stated that for the next four to six months Commission meetings will be dedicated to working on the Master Plan.

Ms. Dubin talked about the meeting that was held to discuss some potential changes which could make operations at the Concession Stand run more smoothly. Ms. DeForrest said it is very likely that the concession stand will still be operated by the City in the Summer of 2006. A drinking fountain has been installed by the children's pool. Wipes will be available so people can clean off their own tables. The group talked about the way the windows functioned and ways to get food out quicker. Ms. DeForrest noted that the City Concession Stand is operating more efficiently then a lot of other places because other facilities prepare food a head of time and then leave it sit there. We will begin offering a lunch pack which will include a juice box, baby carrots and cheese cubes.

Many ideas were discussed about what type of places the Ice Rink could be turned into. Examples were: a Shuffle Board Park, a hedge maze, a Skateboard Park or a place for general recreation.

Old Business/New Business

The Commission agreed to not have a meeting on March 27 and rescheduled the meeting for April 3.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Denise Ucinski